Numb. 112

The TATLER.

By *Iſaac Bickerſtaff* Eſq;

Accedat Suavitas quædam oportet Sermonum, atque Morum, haudquaquam mediocre Condimentum Amicitiæ. Triſtitia autem, & in omni Re Severitas abſit. Habet illa quidem Gravitatem, ſed Amicitia remiſſior eſſe debet, & liberior, & dulcior, & ad omnem Comitatem Facilitatemque proclivior. Tull.

From *Saturday December* 24. to *Tueſday December* 27. 1709.

Shire-Lane, December 26.

AS I was looking over my Letters this Morning, I chanced to caſt my Eye upon the following one, which came to my Hands about two Months ago, from an old Friend of mine, who, as I have ſince learned, was the Perſon that writ the agreeable Epiſtle inſerted in my Paper of the Third of the laſt Month. It is of the ſame Turn with the other, and may be looked upon as a Specimen of *Right Country Letters.*

SIR,

'THIS ſets out to you from my Summer-Houſe upon the Terras, where I am enjoying a few 'Hours Sun-ſhine, the ſcanty ſweet Remains of a 'fine Autumn. The Year is almoſt at the loweſt; 'ſo that in all Appearance, the reſt of my Letters 'between this and Spring will be dated from my 'Parlour-Fire, where the little fond Prattle of a 'Wife and Children will ſo often break in upon 'the Connexion of my Thoughts, that you'l eaſily diſcover it in my Style. If this Winter ſhould 'prove as ſevere as the laſt, I can tell you before-'hand, that I am likely to be a very miſerable 'Man, through the perverſe Temper of my eldeſt 'Boy. When the Froſt was in its Extremity, 'you muſt know, that moſt of the Black-birds, 'Robins, and Finches, of the Pariſh (whoſe Muſick had entertained me in the Summer) took 'Refuge under my Roof. Upon this, my Care 'was, to riſe every Morning before Day to ſet 'open my Windows for the Reception of the Cold 'and the Hungry, whom at the ſame Time I relieved with a very plentiful Alms, by ſtrewing Corn 'and Seeds upon the Floors and Shelves. But *Dicky*, 'without any Regard to the Laws of Hoſpitality, 'conſidered the Caſements as ſo many Traps, and 'uſed every Bird as a Priſoner at Diſcretion. Never did Tyrant exerciſe more various Cruelties: 'Some of the poor Creatures he chaſed to Death a-'bout the Room; others he drove into the Jaws of a 'Blood-thirſty Cat; and even in his greateſt Acts 'of Mercy, either clipped the Wings, or ſinged the 'Tayls, of his innocent Captives. You'l laugh, 'when I tell you I ſimpathiz'd with every Bird in 'its Misfortunes; but I believe you'l think me in 'the Right for bewailing the Child's unlucky Humour. On the other Hand, I am extremely pleaſed, to ſee his younger Brother carry an univerſal 'Benevolence towards every Thing that has Life. 'When he was between Four and Five Years old, 'I caught him weeping over a beautiful Butterfly, 'which he chanced to kill as he was playing with 'it; and I am informed, that this Morning he has 'given his Brother Three Halfpence (which was 'his whole Eſtate) to ſpare the Life of a Tom-Tit. 'Theſe are at preſent the Matters of greateſt Moment within my Obſervation, and I know are too 'trifling to be commuicated to any but ſo wiſe a 'Man as your ſelf, and from one who has the Happineſs to be,

Your moſt Faithful,

And moſt Obedient Servant.

The beſt Critick that ever wrote, ſpeaking of ſome Paſſages in *Homer* which appear extravagant or frivolous, ſays indeed that they are Dreams; but the Dreams of *Jupiter*. My Friend's Letter appears to me in the ſame Light: One ſees him in an idle Hour; but at the ſame Time in the idle Hour of a wiſe Man. A great Mind has ſomething in it too ſevere and forbidding, that is not capable of giving it ſelf ſuch little Relaxations, and of condeſcending to theſe agreeable Ways of Trifling. *Tully*, when he celebrates the Friendſhip of *Scipio* and *Lelius*, who were the greateſt, as well as the politeſt, Men of their Age, repreſents it as a beautiful Paſſage in their Retirement, that they uſed to gather up Shells on the Sea-Shore, and amuſe themſelves with the Variety of Shape and Colour, which they met with in thoſe little unregarded Works of Nature. The great *Epaminondas* could be a Companion to his own Children, and was ſurpriſed by the Ambaſſadors of *Sparta*, as he was riding among them upon an Hobby-Horſe. *Auguſtus* indeed had no Play-Fellows of his own begetting; but is ſaid to have paſſed many of his Hours with little *Mooriſh* Boys at a Game of Marbles, not unlike our modern Taw. There is (methinks) a Pleaſure in ſeeing great Men thus fall into the Rank of Mankind, and entertain themſelves with Diverſions and Amuſements that are agreeable to the very weakeſt of the Species. I muſt frankly confeſs, that it is to me a Beauty in *Cato*'s Character, that he would drink a chearful Bottle with a Friend; and I cannot but own, that I have ſeen with great Delight one of the moſt celebrated Authors of the laſt Age feeding the Ducks in St. *James*'s Park. By Inſtances of this Nature, the Heroes, the Statelmen, the Philoſophers, become as it were familiar with us, and grow the more amiable, the leſs they endeavour to appear awful. A Man who always acts in the Severity of Wiſdom, or the Haughtineſs of Quality, ſeems

to

to move in a perſonated Part: It looks too Conſtrained and Theatrical for a Man to be always in that Character which diſtinguiſhes him from others. Beſides that, the Slackening and Unbending our Minds on ſome Occaſions, makes them exert themſelves with greater Vigor and Alacrity, when they return to their proper and natural State.

As this innocent Way of paſſing a leiſure Hour is not only conſiſtent with a great Character, but very graceful in it, ſo there are Two Sorts of People to whom I would moſt earneſtly recommend it. The Firſt, are thoſe who are uneaſy out of Want of Thought; the Second, are thoſe who are ſo out of a Turbulence of Spirit. The Firſt, are the impertinent; and the Second, the dangerous Part of Mankind.

It grieves me to the very Heart, when I ſee ſeveral young Gentlemen, deſcended of honeſt Parents, run up and down hurrying from one End of the Town to the other, calling in at every Place of Reſort, without being able to fix a Quarter of an Hour in any, and in a perpetual Haſte without knowing for what. It would (methinks) be ſome Conſolation, if I could perſwade theſe precipitate young Gentlemen to compoſe this Reſtleſneſs of Mind, and apply themſelves to any Amuſement, how trivial ſoever, that might give them Employment, and keep them out of Harm's Way. They cannot imagine how great a Relief it would be to them, if they could grow ſedate enough to play for Two or Three Hours at a Game of Puſh-pin. But theſe buſie, idle Animals, are only their own Tormentors: The Turbulent and Dangerous are for embroiling Councils, ſtirring up Seditions, and ſubverting Conſtitutions, out of a meer Reſtleſneſs of Temper, and an Inſenſibility of all the Pleaſures of Life that are calm and innocent. It is impoſſible for a Man to be ſo much employ'd in any Scene of Action, as to have great and good Affairs enough to fill up his whole Time; there will ſtill be Caſms and empty Spaces, in which a working Mind will employ it ſelf to its own Prejudice, or that of others, unleſs it can be at Eaſe in the Exerciſe of ſuch Actions as are in themſelves indifferent. How often have I wiſh'd, for the Good of the Nation, That ſeveral famous Politicians could take any Pleaſure in feeding Ducks. I look upon an able Stateſman out of Buſineſs like a huge Whale, that will endeavour to overturn the Ship, unleſs he has an empty Cask to play with.

But to return to my good Friend and Correſpondent, I am afraid we ſhall both be laugh'd at, when I confeſs, that we have often gone out into the Field to look upon a Bird's-Neſt; and have more than once taken an Evening's Walk together on purpoſe to ſee the Sun ſet. I ſhall conclude with my Anſwer to his foregoing Letter.

Dear SIR,

'I Thank you for your obliging Letter, and your Kindneſs to the Diſtreſs'd, who will, doubtleſs, expreſs their Gratitude to you themſelves the next Spring. As for *Dick* the Tyrant, I muſt deſire you will put a Stop to his Proceedings; and at the ſame time take Care, that his little Brother be no loſer by his Mercy to the *Tom-Tit*. For my own Part, I am excluded all Converſation with Animals that delight only in a Country Life, and am therefore forced to entertain my ſelf as well as I can with my little Dog and Cat. They both of 'em ſit by my Fire every Night, expecting my coming Home with Impatience; and at my Entrance, never fail of running up to me, and bidding me welcome, each of 'em in his proper Language. As they have been bred up together from their Infancy, and ſeen no other Company, they have learn'd each other's Manners, ſo that the Dog often gives himſelf the Airs of a Cat, and the Cat, in ſeveral of her Motions and Geſtures, affects the Behaviour of the little Dog. When they are at Play, I often make one with them; and ſometimes pleaſe my ſelf with conſidering, how much Reaſon and Inſtinct are capable of delighting each other. Thus, you ſee, I have communicated to you the material Occurrences in my Family, with the ſame Freedom that you uſe to me; as I am with the ſame Sincerity and Affection,

Your moſt Faithful,
Humble Servant,
Iſaac Bickerſtaff.

Advertiſements.

SIR William Read, Her Majeſty's Oculiſt in Durham-Yard in the Strand, London, by his long Practice, and great Experience, has lately found out a Medicine that clariſies the Eyes from Suffuſions, and ſtrengthens the Optick Nerves, which infallibly prevents Cataracts in the Beginning, and preſerves the Sight in Old or Young. He likewiſe couches Cataracts without Pain, or much Confinement, if they apply themſelves to him before damaged by Pretenders; as will be atteſted by many Perſons of Quality and others that have found the good Effect thereof. He alſo cures Hair-Lips, or Wry Necks, tho' never ſo deformed; or contracted Limbs; and has lately taken ſeveral Wens of a great Bigneſs; particularly one from a Gentlewoman that weigh'd 26 Pounds, without any Effuſion of Blood, after the Application of his Styptick Water, which all People may be furniſh'd with at his Houſe, with the Medicines for the Eyes above-mention'd, and by my Lady Read in his Abſence.

** The Compleat Gameſter: or Inſtructions how to play at all Manner of uſual and moſt gentile Games, either on Cards, Dice, Billiards, Trucks, Bowls, or Cheſs. Alſo the Arts and Miſteries of Riding, Racing, Archery and Cock-fighting. To which is added, The Game at Baſſet. With a Diſcourſe of Gaming in General. The Deſcription of a Gaming Ordinary, and the Character of a Gameſter. With a Song on the Game at Piquet. All regulated by the moſt experienc'd Maſters. Printed for Charles Brome, at the Gun, the Weſt End of St. Paul's. Price 1 s. 6 d. Where is ſold, the Geographical Cards, giving a Deſcription of the whole World. Price 1 s. a Pack.

Juſt Publiſh'd,

** The Compleat Works of Mr. Thomas Brown, in Proſe and Verſe, Serious, Moral, Comical and Satyrical. Containing a compleat Collection of all his Dialogues, Eſſays, Satyrs, Declamations, Orations, Table-Talk-Letters, both Original and Tranſlations from Greek and Latin: Letters from the Dead to the Living. In three Parts. Comical View of London; Tranſlation-Odes of Horace; Obſervations on Homer, Virgil, and Ovid; Amuſements, Serious and Comical, calculated to the Meridian of London; Laconicks, or new Maxims of State and Converſation, &c. The Third Edition, with large Additions; and a Supplement never before printed. To which is prefix'd, A Character of T. Brown and his Writings. By Dr. James Drake. Printed for S. Briſcoe, and ſold by J. Woodward in St. Chriſtophers-Churchyard, near the Royal-Exchange, and J. Morphew near Stationers-Hall.

PErfect Cure for the Aſthma by an Elixir, (a pleaſant and innocent Medicine) to be taken in Drops, which has done Wonders in that Caſe; but the Author's ſaying ſo being not ſo convincing as trying it will be, he deſires you would for your own Sakes, when, if it does no Good, can do no Harm to the Body, nor much to the Purſe in laying out 3 s. 6 d. which is the Price of a Bottle. To be had only at Mr. Lawrence's, a Toy-ſhop at the Griffin the Corner of Bucklersbury, Poultry.

** Field's Bible, and all other Sorts and Sizes of Bibles and Common-Prayers, fit for Churches and Families, ruled or unruled, and in all Sorts of Binding, viz. Right Shagreen, red and blue Turky, Ruſſia-Leather, &c. Mr. Sturt's Cuts, curiouſly engraven, with all other Sorts of Cuts either for Bibles or Common-Books of Prayers; the Sacrament and Devotion, bound with the Common-Prayer or ſingle; Tate and Brady's new Pſalms, with the new Supplement; Parker on the New Teſtament, in Folio; the fourth and laſt Edition of the Lord Clarendon's Hiſtory of the Rebellion, &c. Wincheſter Manual; a new Britiſh Spelling-Book; Young's Spelling-Book; and Dr. Williams and Lewis's Catechiſm, for the Uſe of Charity-Schools, by Wholeſale or Retale, at reaſonable Rates. Caſes for Letters or Bills. Stains and Ink are likewiſe taken out of Books of Value, and Books neatly bound and gilt, by J. Hazard at the Golden Bible in Stationers-Court near the Hall within Ludgate.

THE Famous POWDER for the STONE, GRAVEL, and STRANGURY, that has perform'd ſo many remarkable Cures in thoſe Caſes, of which there are continued Inſtances. Certificates whereof, together with the Names and Places of Abode of many that have been reliev'd by it, too numerous to be inſerted here, are to be ſeen at Mr. Rogers's, Bookſeller in Fleet-ſtreet. There are likewiſe ſeveral large Stones that it has brought away from divers Perſons, to be ſeen at Mr. Aylmer's, Bookſeller in Cornhil: At both which Places only it is to be ſold, for 5 s. the Paper, which contains 3 Doſes, with Directions. The Perſon who prepares it, is to be ſpoken with every Tueſday and Thurſday, between 11 and 12, at Mr. Rogers's Shop above-mention'd.

TUrkey Coffee, 6 s. 4 d. with allowance to them that buy Quantities. Bohee from 12 to 24 s. All Sorts of Green, the loweſt, 12 s. Chocolate with Sugar, 2 s. 2 d. All Nut, 3 s. 6 d. The fineſt Brazil 48 s. and 3 s. 4 d. an Ounce. Portugal, 18 s. and 1 s. 4 d. an Ounce. Right Amazona, Barcelona, and Port St. Lucar. Sold very cheap by Wholeſale, or Retail; and Orange-Flowerwater; at the Star in Bedford-Court, near Bedford-ſtreet, Covent Garden.